

FOOD HYGIENE AND FOOD SAFETY FOR THE HANDLING AND STORAGE OF DRY FOOD

COVID-19



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| PROLOGUE |

To support hotel and restaurant professionals with their hygiene and safety practices in the COVID-19 situation, ARAVEN has prepared five guides that focus on the importance of hygiene and food safety in this sector.

- Cleaning and disinfection of food containers and utensils.
- Hygiene and food safety in the handling and preservation of vegetables.
- Hygiene and food safety in the handling and preservation of meat and fish (animal proteins).
- Hygiene and food safety in the handling and preservation of dry foods.
- Hygiene and food safety in the preservation of prepared foods.

Professionals from BCC Innovation, the technology center of the Basque Culinary Center have taken part in preparing the contents of these guides. Additionally ARAVEN has also sponsored the “Food hygiene and safety guidelines” published by the Basque Culinary Center and Euro-Toques.

This initiative clearly highlights the commitment of both institutions to help catering businesses improve their health and safety measures, by proposing general and specific hygiene and food safety measures applicable in restaurants that will help them regain the confidence and trust of their customers.



1

FOOD SAFETY AND COVID-19

To prevent infections and food poisoning in the current situation of maximum hygiene requirements due to COVID-19, it is necessary to reassess the risks in order to identify and incorporate preventive measures and additional control points to increase food safety.

Throughout the food chain foodstuffs undergo different preparation processes and situations where there is a risk of contamination. To avoid food contamination, it is absolutely essential to control the risks affecting food safety and to manage food correctly to minimize the majority of these risks.

Food safety must be guaranteed throughout the entire food chain. In the HORECA sector the following phases in managing and treating foods in the kitchen are identified:



Reception of goods



Food storage and preservation



Food handling and preparation



Food presentation or serving

“ Hygiene measures must be stepped up in all food handling phases. ”

Prior to these four phases, food service establishments must apply the necessary measures to prevent workers becoming infected with COVID-19, to avoid exposure and the spread of the virus, by reinforcing, in particular, food handling hygiene practices. ⁽¹⁾

The following guide focuses on food hygiene and safety measures in relation to the handling and preservation of dry food.

Hygiene measures are the best defence to keep the coronavirus from spreading.

2

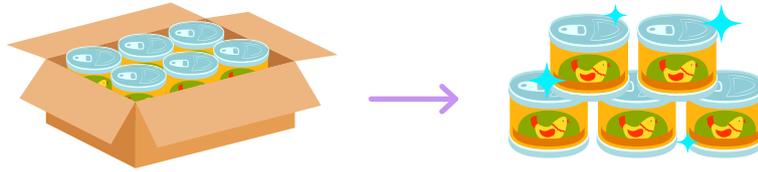
HYGIENE MEASURES FOR THE RECEPTION OF FOOD PRODUCTS

It is important to ensure that all raw materials received comply with the health and quality requirements laid down to prevent foodstuffs endangering consumers' health. For this purpose, the provisions set out in the Hazard Analysis and Critical Control Points (HACCP) system must be followed.



When receiving a delivery of raw materials at restaurant facilities, the following is recommended ⁽²⁾:

- » **Designate a specific zone for exchanging goods.** There should be an area set aside for receiving/returning goods (specific zone, table, marked floor area...) located near to the goods entrance door, separated physically or provisionally from the rest of the establishment.
- » **Remove the packaging** of the raw materials received (cardboard box, plastic bag) whether or not the food is packed inside. This packaging is the outermost wrapping, used during distribution and transport.

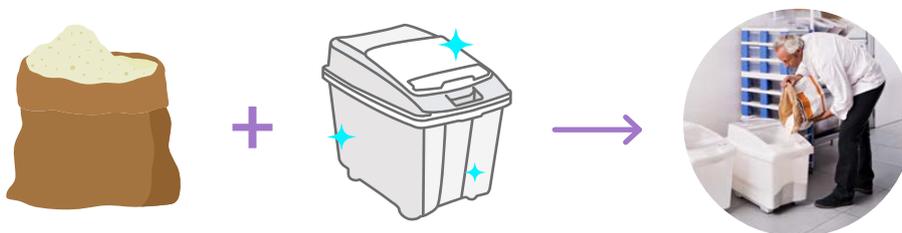


- » If there is no double packaging, **disinfect the container before incorporating it into the storage area** and disinfect those containers that have been in contact with the outside during the supply process..
- » Delivery notes should be left on the table to avoid contact with the supplier and should always remain in this reception zone.
- » All devices that are used (thermometers, pens, etc.) should always be used preferably by the same person. If they are shared, they should be disinfected after each use.



OTHER CONSIDERATIONS:

- » The establishment must have a **supplier control plan** to guarantee product quality.
- » All foods received must be checked to ensure that the containers and packaging are intact, the food temperature is correct, food labeling and shelf-life is correct, it has been transported in adequate hygiene conditions and that the delivery notes are correct.
- » Before the products received are placed in the establishment's own **containers**, check that they are **clean and have been disinfected**.



- » **Mark** the containers used for preserving and storing foods with the necessary information to enable all the products to be **traceable**.
- » **Keep records** showing the checks conducted on the reception of products. ⁽³⁾
- » **Do not take packaging** from the transportation of raw materials **into the processing areas**. ⁽³⁾
- » Once the packing has been received and all procedures have been completed, the worker must wash their hands with soap and water following the instructions provided by official organizations such as the WHO or with hydroalcoholic gels. ⁽⁴⁾

2.1 SPECIFIC MEASURES FOR THE RECEPTION OF DRY FOOD PRODUCTS

- ✓ The **temperature** in the reception area **must be below 25 °C** and humidity levels close to normal.
- ✓ **Conduct visual controls** (the external appearance of the food and containers) of the raw material received and **remove** any canned food with **bulges** or signs of corrosion. Do not accept any food with defective packaging (bags of flour, jars, vats, etc.).
- ✓ When handling bulk products, **do not mix** raw materials **from different batches** in the same container.
- ✓ **Check the product labeling** (best-by dates) and remove or return any products that fail to meet the specifications demanded of the supplier.

When dry products (legumes, pasta, rice, etc.) are delivered in bulk or in large sacks and transferred to the company's plastic containers, the new container must be **marked** with the information on the original label (product brand, batch number, opening date and expiration date or best-by date), thereby ensuring the **traceability** of the raw material.



“ The traceability of all food products used in catering must be guaranteed. ”

3 HYGIENE MEASURES FOR THE STORAGE AND PRESERVATION OF DRY FOOD PRODUCTS

The storage of food is one of the most important points to be taken into account to ensure food safety. Compliance with the provisions of the HACCP system updated to the context of COVID-19 must be guaranteed.

Although dry and non-perishable products such as legumes, rice, pasta, etc., present far fewer preservation difficulties in terms of time and storage than products such as vegetables, meat and fish, a number of measures need to be implemented to ensure such food is preserved in the appropriate manner.



- Non-perishable **product storeroom should be cool, dry and free of aggressive odours**, and food needs to be kept **out of direct sunlight**. ⁽³⁾
- Shelving should be made of smooth, corrosion-resistant, harmless, waterproof materials that are easy to clean and disinfect. ⁽³⁾
- Products should be stored in an orderly manner and raw materials duly labeled to ensure they are not mixed up. ⁽³⁾
- Ensure different products do not come into contact with each other. ⁽³⁾
- Products must never be in contact with the floor. ⁽⁵⁾
- Reduce the presence of original packaging material in storage facilities to a minimum. ⁽⁵⁾
- Conduct regular checks of the state of storeroom. ⁽³⁾

Control warehouse stock. We recommend keeping an inventory of all the existing products in the warehouse and to establish the frequency for checking the amount and condition of the products.

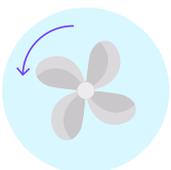
Despite the fact this kind of food will not deteriorate as quickly as perishable foods such as vegetables, meat and fish, some of the environmental practices and factors related to the conservation of the same are listed below. ⁽⁶⁾



Product rotation: we recommend using the FIFO (first-in, first-out) management system. All stored **products should be marked with the date of arrival** in the warehouse and **the expiration** or best-by date.



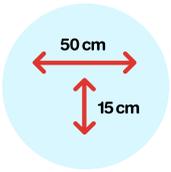
Temperature: storage areas should be kept cool, dry, and well aired. We recommend a room temperature of between 10 °C and 20 °C.



Ventilation: a minimum air exchange rate is required. Storage areas should not feature any equipment that produces heat, such as uninsulated water and steam piping, water heaters, transformers, steam generators, fridge and freezer compressors, etc.



Humidity: humidity control is very important for the storage and preservation of dry food. A relative **humidity of between 50% and 60% is recommended**.

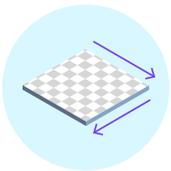


Spacing: ensure the layout of food and containers allows the air to circulate freely and that food is not in contact with the floor. A minimum distance of 15 cm from the floor and 50 cm from the outer walls is recommended in order to reduce the possibility of condensation.



Pest prevention: the entrances to the warehouse must be well protected and closed at all times to prevent insects and rodents from entering.

Pests are one of the greatest dangers to the preservation of dry food.



Warehouse size and use: warehouses should be sized in accordance with the needs of the establishment in order to optimise space management.

We have provided some suggestions for the transfer of certain food products to the restaurant's own containers.

DRY FOOD



Rice
1^{KG} → 1,1 liters



Beans
1^{KG} → 1,4 liters



Flour
1^{KG} → 1,7 liters



Sugar
1^{KG} → 0,63 liters

Figure 1. Approximate illustrative figures for the transfer of dry food products.



ColorClip Accessible Containers are designed for perfect storage, optimal conservation, maximum hygiene and the strictest control of raw materials.

With regard to the storage of non-perishable raw materials, it is of paramount importance to **identify and separate all allergenic materials** from other food. Nuts, gluten-free cereals, peanuts, soy, mustard, lupins and food products containing these allergens as an ingredient must be clearly labeled and separated from other food in order to prevent cross-contact.



Store allergenic raw materials in clearly labeled areas to prevent cross-contact.



For the storage of non-perishable food with low humidity such as legumes, pasta, rice, etc., we recommend the use of containers with closable, not necessarily hermetically sealed, lids, thereby preventing moisture from infiltrating the container and spoiling the food.

Accessible Containers are ideal for the preservation of food with extremely low levels of humidity. The contents of the containers are accessible and the lid stays in the open position without having to be held.



We recommend the use of hermetic containers to prevent non-perishable foods sensitive to oxidation, environmental humidity or loss of aroma (snacks, spices, dehydrated products, nuts, biscuits, etc.) from spoiling.



4 HYGIENIC MEASURES FOR HANDLING DRY FOOD

We recommend complying with the four basic rules (**clean, separate, cook and cool**) to prepare safe food and prevent food poisoning, and, in particular by ensuring thorough hand hygiene" Meaning; Safe food as an effect of having strict hand hygiene protocols.

Specific food handling measures to help prevent the SARS-CoV-2 coronavirus from spreading.



The following are some of the basic hygiene measures to be implemented when handling non-perishable or semi-perishable food ⁽⁷⁾:

- » **Hand hygiene with soap** and water before starting to prepare food, after handling raw food and when preparing meals, handling rubbish and waste, money, after using the bathroom, sneezing, coughing, etc.
- » **Clean kitchen surfaces and utensils before** using them, and, in particular, **after** handling raw food such as meat, fish, eggs, chicken, etc
- » **Work areas** for raw food must always be **separated** from work areas for dry, cooked and pre-cooked food. Always separate **raw food from cooked food**, and from food intended to be eaten raw and that has already been **washed**.
- » Label cutting boards and utensils to ensure they are not used to prepare different families of raw materials. ⁽³⁾
- » Use **different kitchen utensils** (forks, knives, plates, etc.) to handle **raw food**.
- » **Protect all food** until the moment it is processed.
- » **Refrigerate** cooked food as soon as possible, ensuring it is not exposed to room temperature for more than two hours.
- » **Keep** all surplus food in appropriate closed, labeled containers.



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